



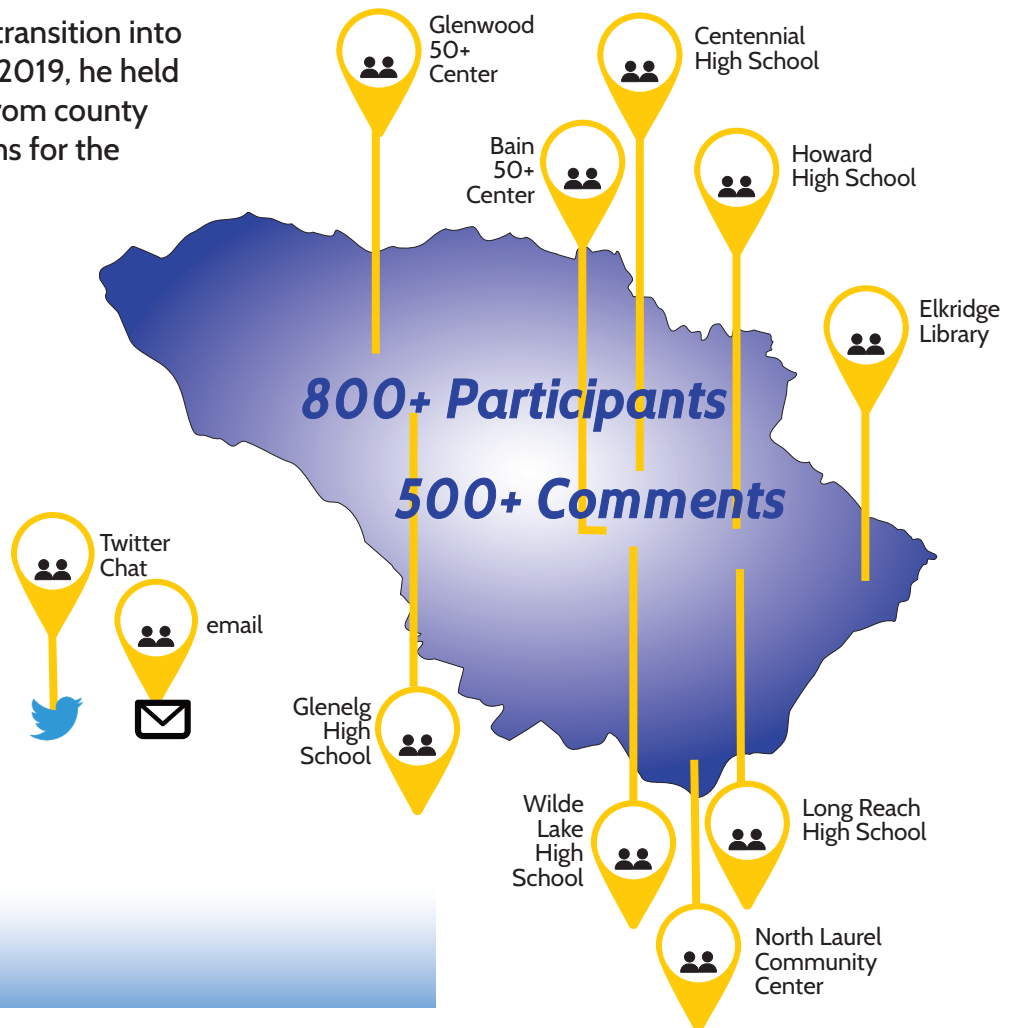
# Listening Session Series *by the numbers*

## County Executive Ball's Listening Series Summary

During County Executive Calvin Ball's transition into office in December 2018 and January 2019, he held a series of listening sessions to learn from county residents about their hopes and dreams for the future of our community.

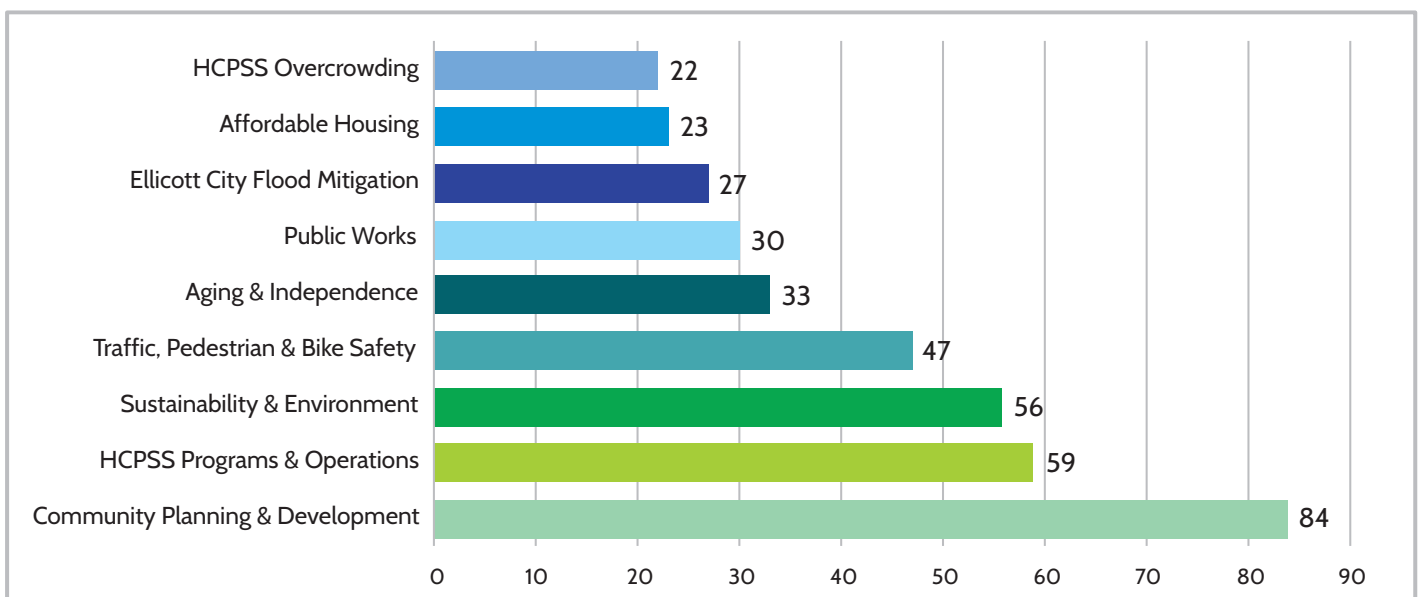
Nine sessions were held in person at various locations through the county. Residents also had the opportunity to participate in an online Twitter Chat and send in their thoughts electronically.

Below is a snapshot of what was learned and how this information will be used to chart our path forward.



## 9 Major Themes

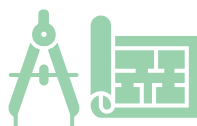
### Number of Comments Per Theme



# 9 Major Themes: Residents Speak Out

## COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

- **Infrastructure:** has not kept pace with development.
- **Community Planning:** to account for environmental stewardship and preservation of the natural beauty of our county.



## HCPSS PROGRAMS & OPERATIONS

- **High school start times:** move back to align with the natural rhythms of adolescents' internal body clocks.
- **Universal Pre-K**
- **Opportunity and achievement gaps**
- **Collaborate with community groups**
- **Extend learning opportunities**



## SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENT

- **Cleaner Roadways:** Several residents expressed concern about the amount of plastic trash in the environment, much of which is visible along the local highways.
- **Plastic Bag Tax**
- **Environmentally Friendly Practices:** when building new facilities.



## TRAFFIC, PEDESTRIAN & BIKE SAFETY

- **Safer Streets:** for cars/trucks, bicyclists, and pedestrians.
- **Increased Safety:** With more development in the county, residents felt that safety measures such as sidewalks, traffic lights, stop signs, and crosswalks have not kept pace. There was a heavy emphasis on ensuring safety at specific intersections along Routes 108, 40, and 1.



## AGING & INDEPENDENCE

- **Aging in Place:** More and more citizens are looking to age in place, and services should be designed to make this easier.
- **The Loan Closet:** Residents wanted to see an expansion of the Loan Closet, which provides needed equipment and information for citizens with disabilities.



## PUBLIC WORKS

- **Stormwater Management Fee:** more equitable stormwater management fee structure.
- **Stormwater Management and Erosion Reduction:** Some residents emphasized a desire to focus on stormwater management and erosion reduction practices throughout the county.



## ELLICOTT CITY FLOOD MITIGATION

- **Flood mitigation in Ellicott City:** Solve issues not just on Main Street, but also in other areas prone to flooding.
- **Main Street:** Several residents and business owners on Main Street expressed a desire for the county to expedite negotiations currently underway for purchasing specified buildings.



## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- **More options:** Long-time residents looking to downsize their homes noted that they would like to see more options for affordable housing in all corners of the county.
- **Individuals with disabilities:** Several advocates for individuals with disabilities expressed a desire for more affordable housing options.



## SCHOOL OVERCROWDING

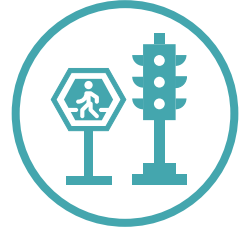
- **Class size:** across the county has increased due to overcrowding.
- **Portable classrooms:** use has increased across the county.
- **Relieve overcrowding:** move forward with plans for high schools, particularly for high schools 13 and 14 in the eastern part of the county.



# An Engaged Community: Direct Feedback from Forums

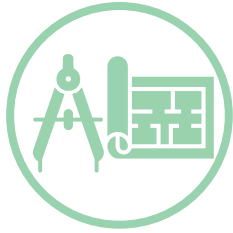


"We need to invest in reliable public transit that actually goes between places people need to get to/from, and within the whole county, not just Columbia."

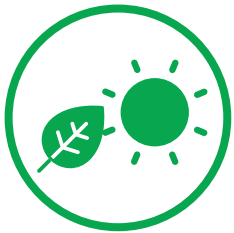


"My dream is that in the future I can bike and walk wherever I want safely and leave my car at home without having to move out of Howard County."

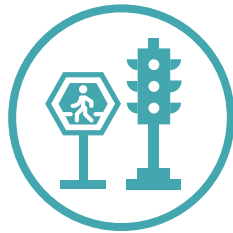
[There is a] "need to develop a comprehensive, evidence-based housing policy framework from which zoning, allocations, fees, and other regulations flow. We have built a piecemeal system of housing and it is being stretched beyond its usefulness."



"Ellicott City is a phoenix that has risen from the ashes time and time again. It proudly wears the scars of its history... Stand strong in the storm that you yourself will face when making decisions regarding the proud mill town....Know that taking your time, weighing your options, and listening to all is what is best."



"Sustainable packaging incubator programs. We have an educated, eco-minded community here. Sustainable packaging is a largely untapped field."



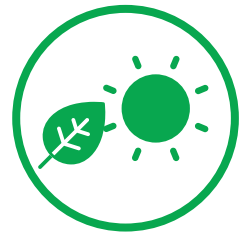
"Yes, we live in a bubble in Howard County! Everything is nice around here. We should do more sidewalks and bike roads."



"I loved the voucher idea for holiday shopping in OEC! It would be great to see similar efforts focused on locally-owned small biz county-wide, and perhaps at times of year that are typically slow."  
#futureofhoco.



"Have our fine officers out walking in our communities. Have them know and grow relationships with our residents and young people."



"I think we can put solar panels on every roof, get rid of all the single use plastics, build the bikeway & more sidewalks, implement complete streets, never again build another school that isn't net zero like Wilde Lake Middle."

# Top 4 Topics by Region

	Columbia	Elkridge	Ellicott City	North Laurel/Savage	Western Howard County
1	Traffic, pedestrian & bike safety	School overcrowding	Ellicott City flood mitigation	Slowing development	Conservation & preservation
2	Slowing development	Need for more community facilities	Slowing development	Route 1 Master Plan	Slowing development
3	Public transportation	Slowing development	Traffic, pedestrian & bike safety	Traffic, pedestrian & bike safety	Community sustainability
4	Citizen services	Traffic, pedestrian & bike safety	School overcrowding	Public transportation	Recreation & parks amenities



*“The listening sessions gave me an opportunity to listen to residents who wanted to share their thoughts, experiences, frustrations, hopes and dreams for Howard County. The sessions brought to the surface individual concerns and ideas, as well as themes and trends in specific regions and across the county.*

*The information gleaned from the sessions will be extremely valuable, in conjunction with the learnings and recommendations from the Transition Team Report. Together, this wealth of information is helping to shape our shared priorities for the years ahead.*

*I am beyond appreciative to the residents who took the time and energy to be a part of this process, and look forward to our continued collaboration as we prioritize projects and resource allocation in alignment with our collective vision for the county.”*

## What’s Next?

### Constituent Services

Our constituent services team is following up on individual constituent issues and concerns that were raised through this series.

### Setting Priorities

All of the great ideas shared for the future of Howard County are being analyzed in conjunction with the recommendations from the Transition Team. Senior staff are incorporating recommendations into work plans.

### Strategic Planning & Budgeting

The valuable input from this process shows just what matters to residents from across the county. Now the hard work of strategic planning and budgeting begins.